

News to Educate, Engage, and Empower Entrepreneurs

DESPITE CEREBRAL PALSY, HORDVILLE TEEN FINDS EXPRESSION THROUGH ART

Published Saturday, December 19, 2009

POLK -- If you want to know exactly what makes Erin Blase tick, take a good look at her wheelchair.

Way down near the bottom is the biggest clue: a full, splattered palette of colors, crisscrossing the gray wheel.

Blase, a 19-year-old senior at High Plains Community Schools in Polk, has cerebral palsy and can't walk or talk. But when she's painting or designing cards, she's



expressing herself as loudly and clearly as any of her classmates.

"She's very compassionate, a very caring person, and I see that in her cards," said Becky Carlstrom, a High Plains paraprofessional who has been working with Blase since she was 4. "She really puts herself into it."

Others have seen Blase's passion and compassion, too: She has won two awards for her artwork in the past

month. Last month, Prentke Romich Co., which makes alternative communication devices for people with speech difficulties, chose Blase's design as its company Christmas card, which it sends to all of its corporate vendors and partners.

And this week, Blase found out that a bright, expressionist-style painting she did last year was honored with a spot on the Nebraska Federation Council for Exceptional Children's 2010 calendar.

Blase has only been delving deeply into art for the past four years. She has limited control of her arms, and she was brought into high school art classes unwillingly at first. Gradually, she moved from hand-over-hand painting to using the brush herself and making her own brushstrokes. Once her teachers removed the right arm of her wheelchair last year to allow her greater range of motion, her painting style and enthusiasm took off.

This fall, for example, she created a stylish four-piece series in mixed media depicting tall, thin trees in each season.

"She's really taken more charge of her artwork," said Fran Lott, her art teacher. "She has a good eye for color and some very nice brushwork."

After Blase chooses a color, a paraprofessional, Linda Edson, puts paint on the brush and puts it in Blase's hand.

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www.nde.state.ne.us/entreped/



DESPITE CEREBRAL PALSY, HORDVILLE TEEN FINDS EXPRESSION THROUGH ART

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Edson then holds the canvas as Blase brushes, moving it around if Blase indicates she should. Her level of satisfaction with her work can be pretty easily determined from her facial expressions.

It's not always a polished process -- Edson calls it "karate painting" -- but the results speak for themselves.

"I was pretty skeptical at first, but she does it," said Blase's mother, Shawna Blase. "It's her artwork, it's her expression, and it's really cool to see."

Blase has turned her card designs into a small business, thanks to an entrepreneurship class she took last year at Central Community College in Columbus. She designs cards for various occasions (graduation is her busiest season), and sells them to High Plains teachers and a few others around the area.



Erin Blase proudly works her Card Creations exhibit at the Central Community College-Columbus campus Entrepreneurship Showcase in April 2009.

Blase's mother and the paraprofessionals who work with her said they've seen her artwork help her become more decisive about what she wears and what she does, while also helping bring out her compassion toward others.

Blase, who lives near Hordville, communicates by pointing a laser from a silver dot on her cheek toward

a machine mounted on her wheelchair with more than 100 words and names, using sequences of them to spell out questions, statements and commands.

She's like her peers in many ways: She loves the "Twilight" series, texting and fashion, and she frequently finds herself teasing the boys she sees each day. She said her favorite part about painting is listening to music, and her favorite artist is Taylor Swift.

Her artwork also captures a lot of that adolescent emotion. A look at her sketchbook from a stretch this fall when her communication device was broken gives a good picture.

"She was very frustrated, and it showed in her work," Edson said. "She's very, very emotional about her work."

Generally, though, Shawna Blase said her daughter is energetic and fun-loving, thriving on joking and humor rather than becoming sad or self-conscious about her disability.

Blase will graduate in May, then spend another year at High Plains before she turns 21. Her future after that isn't certain, but Edson suspects that her newfound love for art will be a part of it.

"Her art has given her somewhere to go, because it means so much to her," she said.

Whatever she does, she'll go after it with gusto, said her mother.

"She doesn't want to just sit around at home," Shawna Blase said. "She's a go-getter. She wants to get up and go and do and get involved."

Permission to reprint granted by the Grand Island Independent. Story by Mark Coddington, Regional Reporter, mark.coddington@theindependent.com.

By starting a venture of your own that combines high artistic standards with sound business principles, you can "rock your dreams."
Elliot McGucken, Ph.D.

SUCCESSFUL ENTREPRENEURS VIDEO SERIES OFFERED BY SBA AND U.S. POSTAL SERVICE



The U.S. Small Business Administration and the U.S. Postal Service bring you *Delivering Success*, a series of video interviews with successful entrepreneurs who share lessons learned about owning a business.

Discover how these successful entrepreneurs met the challenges of business ownership. You can pick the topic that interests you or view the entire series in less than an hour.

Pick the topic that interests you or sit back and spend less than an hour viewing the entire series. Discover how these successful entrepreneurs met the challenges of small business ownership.

Entrepreneurial Spirit - learn what it takes to turn a passion into a business.

Getting Started - how to overcome obstacles when starting a business.

Financing - discover how SBA-backed financing helped these entrepreneurs start their businesses.

Planning & Research - critical components of success explained by owners who know how.

Marketing 101 - explore a variety of marketing techniques to build your customer base.

Hiring & Developing Employees - these owners let you in on what worked for them.

Promoting & Growing Your Business - learn innovative techniques to increase your business.

Business Reality Check - be prepared to change course from small business owners who had to do just that.

To learn more, go to <http://www.sba.gov/tools/audiovideo/deliveringsuccess/index.html>. SBA and Dell present interviews with successful entrepreneurs and experts who know how to grow a business. Real stories and topic-specific advice will help you decide if your business is ready for growth. For more information, go to <http://www.sba.gov/strategiesforgrowth/>.

And to recap, check out 10 quick tips to business success.



STRATEGIES FOR COMMUNITY PROSPERITY WEBINAR SERIES OFFERED THROUGH MAY 2010

The Heartland Center for Leadership Development in collaboration with the RUPRI Center for Rural Entrepreneurship is pleased to announce a new webinar series with the theme **Strategies for Community Prosperity**. The webinar series began in January and concludes in May. Upcoming webinars and topics are:

- February 18, 2010 *Entrepreneurial Coaching--From Crisis to Economic Growth*
- March 18, 2010 *Plowing New Ground--Refreshed Leadership Development for Revitalized Economies*
- April 15, 2010 *Energized Youth--Energized Communities*
- May 20, 2010 *People Count--Rebuilding Rural Communities with People Attraction Strategies*



Each webinar will start at 12:00 p.m. CST and end at 1:00 p.m. The training team includes Milan Wall and Kurt Mantonya from the Heartland Center and Don Macke and Craig Schroeder from the RUPRI Center for Rural Entrepreneurship.

The cost of each webinar is \$59.99 but if you purchase the entire webinar series at one time, the cost is \$250. For more details and registration information about this exciting webinar series, please visit the Heartland Center's webinar page at http://www.heartlandcenter.info/webinar_reg/.

RETENTION & EXPANSION FUNDAMENTALS COURSE TO BE OFFERED IN NORFOLK

The Elkhorn Valley Economic Development Council (EVEDC) Board and Staff and the Nebraska Economic Developers Association (NEDA) Board of Directors are pleased to be hosting and sponsoring the Business Retention & Expansion Fundamentals Course on March 24th & 25th at the Norfolk Lodge & Suites, Divots Conference Center located in northeast Nebraska.

The course is being offered at a discounted rate of \$225 for NEDA members; and registration will soon be available online at www.BREI.org. Deadline to register is March 17th - space is limited! Tuition includes three meals, all the course materials and a one year membership to Business Retention Expansion International (BREI). This intense two-day course will help prepare you to develop and implement a BRE program for your community.

Successfully completing this course will provide you with the BRE Project Coordinator certification and it is a required, prerequisite course if you wish to continue toward earning the BRE Professional designation. NEDA will be offering additional BRE courses that may be applied toward this designation.

More information will be available soon online at www.NEDA1.org and www.BREI.org. A hotel block has been reserved at a discounted rate.

SAVE THE DATE! Coming Soon...



**Business Retention & Expansion
Fundamentals Certification Course**
March 24-25, 2010

Wednesday, 9 am-5 pm & Thursday, 8 am-5 pm
Norfolk Lodge & Suites • Divots Conference Center • 4200 West Norfolk Ave. (West Hwy 275), Norfolk, NE

Benefits Include:

- Course materials and three meals
- Direct interaction with BRE practitioners
- 1-yr BREI Membership
- Earn BRE Project Coordinator certification
- Networking & more!

Tuition: NEDA Members-\$225; Professional Developers of Iowa Members-\$275; Non-members-\$325

Hotel Block Rate: \$74.99/night + tax (single or double rooms). Call 888-355-0563; ask for NEDA/EVEDC rate.
Additional accommodations are available at the Hampton and Holiday Inn located within one mile of Divots Conference Center.

Conference Registration Deadline: March 17, 2010

Space is limited

Online registration soon available at www.BREI.org

Event sponsored and hosted by


www.neda1.org


www.elkhornedc.com

Questions: Call Elkhorn Valley EDC: 402-371-8142
Course Questions: Call Connie Wagner: 800-677-9930 code 00

Watch for details...Online registration coming soon at www.BREI.org

If you have any questions, contact:

David Simonsen, Executive Director
Elkhorn Valley Economic Development Council
309 Madison Avenue
Norfolk, NE 68702
dsimonsen@evedc.com
402.371.8142 Office
402.369.0027 Mobile

FOURTH ANNUAL BUBBLEWRAP® COMPETITION FOR YOUNG INVENTORS

Sealed Air Corporation and The National Museum of Education are proud to announce the fourth annual BubbleWrap® Competition for Young Inventors for grades 5-8. This year's competition is BIGGER and BETTER with more chances to win and expanded prizes including awards up to \$10,000 and a trip to New York City!



This innovative contest incorporates national and state academic standards in the fields of engineering design, problem-solving, entrepreneurship and all of the core curricular subjects. They look

forward to seeing great entries in any discipline from inventive students!

The deadline is March 3, 2010, and applications may be received via hard copy (mail, email or FAX). The details for the competition are available at www.nmoe.org.

If you have questions, or if you would like to discuss the contest, email NMOE at info@nmoe.org or call 330.376.8300.

Bubble Wrap® cushioning was invented in 1960 by Alfred Fielding and Marc Chavannes, and was originally intended to be used as textured wallpaper; however, the two inventors quickly realized it was actually a superior cushioning material and went on to found Sealed Air Corporation, now a global, Fortune 500 company that offers a wide range of packaging solutions and has annual sales in excess of \$4 billion.

PARTNERSHIPS FOR INNOVATION OFFERS SCHOLARSHIPS TO ATTEND YOUNG PROFESSIONALS SUMMIT



Partnerships for Innovation (PFI) recently invited Entrepreneurship Teachers / Instructors to attend the Young Professionals Summit, March 4,

2010. The main speakers are three young and dynamic entrepreneurs with timely and inspiring messages.

While the Summit is geared toward those ages 21-40, the conference planners encourage professionals and entrepreneurship educators of ALL ages to attend.

The keynote luncheon speaker, Blake Mycoskie, is the founder and chief shoe giver, TOMS Shoes. TOMS was founded on a simple premise: With every pair purchased, TOMS gives a pair to a child in need.



The opening speaker, Patricia Martin, is the CEO and founder of LitLamp Communications and author of *Renaissance Generation*. Martin pioneered the point of view that the convergence of art, technology and entertainment is remaking the American consumer.

Closing speaker, William Taylor, is the founding editor of Fast Company and a noted author and entrepreneur. William is an agenda-setting writer, speaker, and entrepreneur who has shaped the global conversation about the best ways to compete, innovate, and succeed.

The arrival of his new book, *Mavericks at Work*, promises to once again change how companies and their leaders navigate a fast-moving world.

Breakout sessions will take place throughout the day and many have relevance to entrepreneurship. A few of these include:

- ◆ Your Digital Resume
- ◆ Managing Business in a Pluralistic Society
- ◆ SustainABILITY: Thriving in Today's ECONOMY
- ◆ Business, the Lost Art of Today's Start-up
- ◆ Innovation in Action
- ◆ Positioning Yourself for Success—Advice and Strategies for Young Professionals

PFI will be paying the registration fee for eleven secondary teachers and community college instructors to attend the Greater Omaha Young Professionals Summit. Those selected from the pool of applicants who applied by the PFI deadline were:

- ◆ Lisa Tschauner—Central Community College
- ◆ Doris Lux—Central Community College
- ◆ Heather Nelson—Metropolitan Community College
- ◆ Scot Baillie—Southeast Community College
- ◆ Tim Mittan—Southeast Community College
- ◆ Angie Schafer—Northeast Community College
- ◆ Carol Ringenberg—Southeast Community College
- ◆ Lisa Alfrey—Papillion LaVista South High School
- ◆ Dustin Penas—Papillion LaVista South High School
- ◆ Kristen Job—Westside High School
- ◆ Jerrie Glassman—Omaha Northwest High School

Those selected to attend will be asked to submit a 1 page synopsis of the best sessions they attended or an article suitable for publication in the PFI newsletter, Nebraska Entrepreneurship News or their local newspaper.

Missed the scholarship deadline but still want to attend? You can still register. Prices are \$125 for the all day Summit (which includes the keynote luncheon) or \$75 for the keynote luncheon only. Registration closes February 25th.

March 4, 2010

Greater Omaha
Young Professionals Summit

Your Seat at the Table

MARKETPLACE 2010 - OPENING DOORS TO SUCCESS A GREAT WAY TO CELEBRATE NATIONAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP WEEK



MarketPlace 2010 is coming up – mark your calendars and register now for the event on February 23 and 24! The Ramada Convention Center in Kearney will host the event.

This year's teach-ins promise to be the best yet with subjects ranging from Internet Profitability to Branding on a Shoestring Budget to Balancing Business and Life.

Balancing Business and Life will be presented by Scott Knapp and Lauralee Miller. Scott works for the Nebraska Business Development Center's Procurement Technical Assistance Center and provides government contracting assistance to businesses across Central and Western Nebraska from his office on the campus of the University of Nebraska Kearney. Lauralee Miller is a managing partner of The Alternative Group and has over 25 years experience in management and marketing from small businesses to Fortune 500 corporations.



The conference will also feature a MarketPlace Store where conference attendees can purchase some great products produced by Nebraska entrepreneurs.

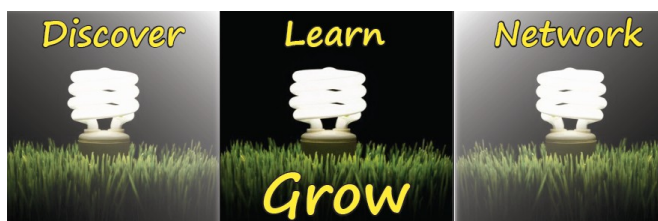
MarketPlace offers the following tracks – something for everyone:

Marketing—Unique approaches to help entrepreneurs prosper through innovative marketing (examples: branding and packaging products or services, niche marketing, etc.)

Agriculture—Exceptional opportunities available as an agricultural business (examples: agri tourism, direct marketing of local foods, high value products)

Financing—Educational tools to increase knowledge (examples: cash is king, financing your business)

Community Development—Innovative community offerings to enhance unique entrepreneurial approaches (examples: how's and why's of being an entrepreneurial community, public policy, renewing your community, youth retention/attraction, investment clubs)



Technology—Extraordinary ways to increase business using technology anywhere you live (examples: podcasting, off- and online businesses)

Business Development—Programs that build business competency levels, creating awareness improving business skills (examples: risk management, legal issues, customer service)

Hispanic—Sessions taught in Spanish to enhance business skills (examples: marketing, nuts & bolts of business start-ups, bookkeeping basics)

Youth—Introduce entrepreneurial experiences and concepts encouraging career exploration and opportunities

Women Business Owners—What does it take for you, a WOMAN, to start your own business? What challenges will YOU face in taking control of your destiny and opening your own business?

Realizing the importance of small businesses to our local economy, the Center for Rural Affairs and their many sponsors are excited about this outstanding opportunity allowing individuals to learn from the best at the 2010 MarketPlace Small Business Conference.

Early bird registration ends February 10th; regular registration ends February 22nd with a late registration fee thereafter. For more information check out the Center for Rural Affairs web site at www.cfra.org/marketplace/home or you can reach Joy Marshall, event planner at joym@cfra.org or 402.614.5558.

HUSKER STADIUM SKYBOXES WILL SHOWCASE THE INAUGURAL “MAKE IT HAPPEN-STUDENT QUICK PITCH” COMPETITION



The Nebraska Center for Entrepreneurship, along with the Southeast Community College Entrepreneurship Center and the Lincoln Entrepreneurship Focus Program High School are preparing for the inaugural *Make it Happen—Student Quick Pitch Competition*.

The event will take place during National Entrepreneurship Week, on Thursday, February 25th, beginning at 5:00 p.m.

To add to the excitement of young prospective entrepreneurs, the competition will be held on the Club Level of the Memorial Stadium skyboxes. With the Memorial Stadium lights serving as a backdrop, students will quick pitch their ideas for a successful startup.

This event will provide students in grades 9-12, as well as those enrolled in community colleges and universities across Nebraska, to pitch their business startup idea to a panel of entrepreneurially-minded judges from the community. The only requirement to enter the competition is to be enrolled in a Nebraska school.

EVENT DETAILS

Thursday, February 25th, 2010
Memorial Stadium—West Stadium Club
Stadium Drive and T St., Lincoln, NE
Competitor Sign-in: 5:00 p.m. to 5:45 p.m.
Pitches begin at 6:00 p.m.
Food and beverages will be available for purchase at the event

COMPETITION STRUCTURE

Students will be divided into three divisions according to the type of Nebraska school they attend:

- High School (grades 9-12)
- 2-year college
- 4-year college (undergraduate and graduate)

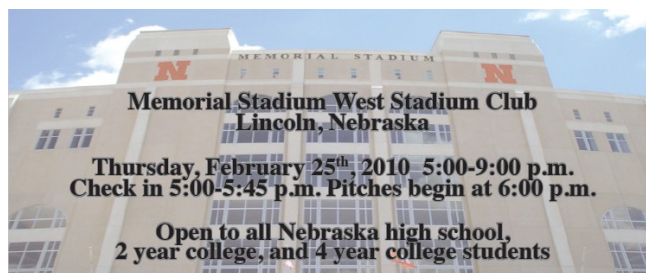
Up to 60 students will be selected to present their idea. Each presenter will have three minutes to engage and enlighten the judges. There will be an additional three minutes to answer one question from the judging panel.

WHAT IS A QUICK PITCH?

A quick pitch (sometimes known as an elevator pitch) is a 30-second to 5-minute action-oriented description of a business venture designed to:

- Engage the interest of the audience
- Persuade them to participate in the business venture as you see fit (investor, customer, partner, referral source, etc.)

Following the selection of the winner from their track (there will be six tracks), the judges will spend a few minutes providing feedback to the group as a whole. Cash prizes will be awarded to the winner of each track.



APPLICATIONS

Applications should be submitted online at entrepreneurship.unl.edu. If necessary, they may be submitted via e-mail at entprenshp@unlnotes.unl.edu, fax at 402.472.6278, or mailed to Nebraska Center for Entrepreneurship, 1240 R St., CBA 217, PO Box 880487, Lincoln, NE 68588.

This is truly an opportunity to embrace and expand the entrepreneurial spirit that is alive and well in Nebraska.

For more information about the event, call the Center for Entrepreneurship at 402.472.3353 or e-mail entprenshp@unlnotes.unl.edu.

TIME TO REGISTER FOR 2010 NEBRASKA SUMMIT ON ENTREPRENEURSHIP



The 4th Annual Nebraska Summit on Entrepreneurship returns to Lincoln on February 26, 2010. This year's Summit will be at the Holiday Inn Downtown at 141 North 9th Street in Lincoln.

The Summit is sponsored by the Nebraska Business-Higher Education Forum, the Gallup Organization, and the University of Nebraska.

This year's conference is built around the theme *Entrepreneurial Lifestyles and Legacies*. There is no registration fee, but seating is limited so early pre-registration is highly recommended.

Registration and information about the conference can be found at www.nebraskaentrepreneur.com. Questions can be e-mailed to sbeachler@nebraska.edu.

The conference will "open its doors" at 8:00 a.m. with pick-up of registration materials for those who pre-registered and a chance to enjoy refreshments and networking.

The Opening Session features Peter Kotsiopoulos, Vice President for University Affairs, University of Nebraska; James B. Milliken, President, University of Nebraska; and Governor Dave Heineman.

Session I starts at 9:45 with a six-person panel

moderated by Dave Specht. The panel will share their thoughts and expertise around the theme, *Family Business in Nebraska—Legacies of Success*.

Session II is all about *The Big Picture* with Bo Fishback, Vice President of Entrepreneurship at the Kauffman Foundation as the featured presenter.

Session III has the theme *Entrepreneurship, A Student's Perspective*. Kathleen Thornton, Associate Director of the University of Nebraska Center for Entrepreneurship will moderate a panel multi-sector student panel.

At 12:30 p.m., a Luncheon and Recognition of Awards will take place. Jim Clifton, Chairman and CEO of the Gallup Organization will share his thoughts on *Entrepreneurship: The Playoff Game of our Lives*.

At 2:00 p.m., breakout sessions will be offered around the theme *Where do we go now?* Track 1 will focus on *Stepping Beyond* (outreach), Track 2 will be focused on *Bridging the Valley* (finance), and Track 3 will be *To the Marketplace* (action). The conference adjourns at 3:30 p.m.

Remember, registration is free, but you must pre-register at www.nebraskaentrepreneur.com. Questions? Call 402.472.3777 or e-mail sbeachler@nebraska.edu.

AWARD-WINNING BUSINESS ADVICE AND NETWORKING CAN BE FOUND AT STARTUP NATION

By entrepreneurs. For entrepreneurs. That's the tagline for StartupNation®, a free service founded by Jeff and Rich Sloan, lifelong entrepreneurs and brothers.

Their website, www.startupnation.com, was created to be a one-stop shop for entrepreneurial success.

StartupNation® gives access to step-by-step advice, helpful articles, small business and entrepreneur forums, member-to-member networking, podcasts, contest, and much more.

The Sloan brothers formed StartupNation® in 2002 as a way to offer entrepreneurs the ultimate resource for starting and growing a business. The pair co-host the nationally-syndicated StartupNation Radio call-in program and are authors of "StartupNation: Open for Business."

Joining StartupNation is free and simple. Log in at <http://www.startupnation.com/community/join.php> to submit your information to join a great learning community.

NATIONAL CONFERENCE FOR SMALL FOOD MANUFACTURERS



The Food Processing Center at the University of Nebraska is sponsoring and planning the second annual National Small Food Manufacturer Conference to be held on May 20-21, 2010 in Omaha, Nebraska.

Additional sponsors include the Nebraska Manufacturing Extension Partnership, which is a strategic partner as well as a conference sponsor and the USDA Rural Development.

Participants from throughout the U.S. will be invited to attend this important conference where they will increase their knowledge on issues and challenges directly related to small food manufacturing businesses.

"The first conference was held in 2009 and was so well received that The Food Processing Center will host this event on an annual basis. We have created an even more exciting agenda for the upcoming conference, which will continue to help small food manufacturers explore opportunities and expand their businesses," explained Dr. Rolando A. Flores, Director of The Food Processing Center.

Many nationally recognized speakers will be on hand for this conference. Attendees will have the opportunity to hear from Ellie Mirman, an expert on

using social networking sites to promote and market products. Patrick Lynch from the National Association of the Specialty Food Trade will discuss the current state of and trends in the specialty food industry. These are just two of the many presenters scheduled to speak at the conference.

The Food Processing Center is nationally recognized for its support of the food industry since 1983. The Center has provided technical and business assistance to hundreds of food entrepreneurs and manufacturers throughout the country and in many foreign countries. This in-depth knowledge and assistance to the industry has allowed them to develop a conference specifically targeted to the issues small food manufacturers encounter every day.

By attending, participants will learn from nationally known speakers, participate in interactive sessions, explore new opportunities, network with peers and industry experts and come away motivated and inspired to grow their business.

Early registration is encouraged due to limited space. To receive a conference brochure contact: Jill Gifford, Food Processing Center, University of Nebraska – Lincoln, 143 H.C. Filley Hall, Lincoln, NE 68583-0928, phone 402.472.2819, e-mail: jgifford1@unl.edu, or visit the conference website: www.fpc.unl.edu/nsfmc.

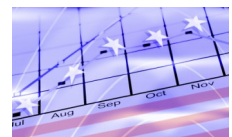
HOW IMPORTANT ARE SMALL BUSINESSES TO THE U.S.?

According to the U.S. Department of Commerce, The Census Bureau, U.S. Department of Labor and other sources, small businesses are CRUCIAL to our economy.

Small firms in the United States:

- ◆ Represent 99.7 percent of all employer firms.
- ◆ Employ just over half of all private sector employees.
- ◆ Have generated 64 percent of net new jobs over the past 15 years.

- ◆ Are 52 percent home-based and 2 percent franchises.
- ◆ Hire 40 percent of high tech workers (such as scientists, engineers, and computer programmers).
- ◆ Produce 13 times more patents per employee than large patenting firms; these patents are twice as likely as large firm patents to be among the one percent most cited.



Source: Frequently Asked Questions, SBA Office of Advocacy, www.sba.gov/advo

ENHANCING YOUR ONLINE PRESENCE WEBINAR SERIES CONTINUES

The second of the three part series on "Enhancing Your Online Presence" is scheduled for February 11, 2010, at 2 p.m. EDT; 1 p.m. CDT; 12 noon MDT; 11 a.m. PDT.

The February session will focus on **Website Analytics**. Vishal Singh, Instructional Multimedia Designer-Communications, Information and Technology, University of Nebraska will present information on Google Analytics and how it generates detailed statistics about visitors to your website. This powerful website analytical tool can help you improve your websites.



eXtension Entrepreneurs and Their Communities webinars are on the 2nd Thursday of every month. All of the webinars are recorded and available for on-demand viewing but nothing beats the live presentation so mark your calendars and spend an hour a month learning with them. The monthly seminars take place on the 2nd Thursday of the month at 2 p.m. EDT; 1 p.m. CDT; 12 noon MDT; 11 a.m. PDT.

All webinars are one hour long. Free and open to everyone, this session is part of a monthly series. The Web meeting room opens 10 minutes before the start time. Go to connect.extension.iastate.edu/ecop to view. Newcomers to online learning are welcome.

MARCH 11 - GET FOUND!

On March 11, Jay Jenkins, Extension Educator, University of Nebraska will discuss how to "get found." Is your information getting lost in the sea of information available on the Internet? Are you lost in the maze of acronyms and vague meanings of terms like SEO, SEM, keywords, tags, page titles and subheadings? You will learn how clearly written and properly implemented web pages get found.

For more information about the webinars, contact:

Connie Hancock
University of NE Extension
Extension Educator
920 Jackson St.
Sidney, NE 69162
308.254.4455 (phone)
308.254.6055 (fax)
chancock1@unl.edu



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR RELEASES REPORT ON ENCOURAGING ENTREPRENEURSHIP

The U. S. Department of Labor (DOL), Employment and Training Administration (ETA) has released the DOL Report on encouraging entrepreneurship for the unemployed.



The Consortium for Entrepreneurship conducted a yearlong study of how the Workforce Investment

System addresses careers as an entrepreneur when helping the unemployed. The resulting report entitled "THINK ENTREPRENEURS! A Call to Action" with subtitle "Integrating Entrepreneurship in the Workforce Investment System" is now available on the Consortium website in a special section focused on assisting job-seekers located at http://www.entre-ed.org/_how/ccr/onestop.html

Jane Oates, Assistant Secretary for ETA, announced the availability of the report as part of a Webinar on January 22.

Ms. Oates said, "ETA has not provided resources for entrepreneurship in the past, so I am delighted to get our report out. Workforce Investment Boards throughout the nation can partner with both in-school and out of school education and training programs to develop needed skills."

Finally, Assistant Secretary Oates said she was very enthusiastic about this as a great beginning to get the word out. Possibilities are endless and she indicated she would be glad to be engaged in discussions of it.

For more information about the Workforce Investment System visit www.careeronestop.org or call 1-877-US2-JOBS.

LEARNING FROM THE BOSSES



Imagine the owners of a painting company, an international-news translation web site, a high-tech research company, and a sewing-goods store—along with 10 other entrepreneurs—sitting down together in the same room.

Sounds like the beginning of a bad joke or even a bad dream, right? Wrong. It sounds like the beginning of a fantastic conversation among a group of very knowledgeable people—a conversation that MBAResearch staff had the privilege of participating in recently.

Despite the business owners' diverse backgrounds, they came together with one purpose in mind: to provide input on what entrepreneurs need to know and be able to do to start and run their businesses successfully. Given the strong personalities in the room, there were some differences of opinion, of course, but the 15 entrepreneurs were much more in agreement than not during the meeting. Some of the points that they agreed upon include:

It is impossible to create a list of every personality trait that an entrepreneur should have. Entrepreneurs can have very different personalities, yet they can all be successful business owners.

Entrepreneurs come from all walks of life. Some become business owners straight out of high school or college, while others wait until later in life to open their own businesses. There is no one right path to becoming an entrepreneur.



Regardless of how much an entrepreneur knows about opening and running a business, s/he should always seek out the help of experts such as attorneys, accountants, risk management professionals, etc.

No matter how much money and time an entrepreneur estimates that s/he needs to start up a business, it's never enough. According to one member of the group, "an aspiring business owner should determine how much capital s/he needs for

start-up, triple that amount, and then triple it again!" That's an important cautionary statement for any prospective entrepreneur.

"Visioning" is not just the stuff of textbooks. Successful entrepreneurs develop a vision of their companies and strive to make that vision a reality each and every day.

Many small business owners create their own advertisements—especially print and radio ads—rather than hiring marketing-communications firms to develop the ads for them.



Environmentally-friendly business practices and products are important. After all, they can directly impact business expenses and profits. Meeting participants explained that when speaking of these practices and products, we should use the internationally-accepted term "sustainability." "Going green," on the other hand, is a phrase used almost exclusively by the U.S.

These are just a few of the many insights that MBAResearch staff gained from the meeting. Practically everyone involved in the process agreed that a one-day discussion about entrepreneurship was completely inadequate. There is so much to learn about entrepreneurship from successful (and not so successful) business owners. Entrepreneurs seem to love to talk and share what they know, so seek these experts out, and don't be afraid to ask them questions!

April Miller, Senior Research Associate, and Beth Osteen, VP Research and Development, facilitated this focus group in January 2010, as part of the MBAResearch work to validate Business Administration standards. This focus group was conducted on behalf of the Ohio Department of Education's CTE program.

Permission to reprint this article granted by MBAResearch, www.MBAResearch.org. MBAResearch is a not-for-profit curriculum center funded and operated by a consortium of 39 state education departments.

FORUM TO DISCUSS CHALLENGES OF MINORITY ENTREPRENEURS

Discussing *Challenges of Minority Entrepreneurs* will be the theme of the Minority Entrepreneur Forum on Tuesday, February 23, 2010, at the Durham Museum in Omaha from 10:00 a.m.-1:30 p.m. The Durham Museum is located at 801 S. 10th St. in Omaha and is an outstanding venue to host this event.

The Forum will be one of many events in Nebraska during National Entrepreneurship Week (February 20-27, 2010).

Two panel discussions will provide potential solutions to existing business challenges and information about the resources available to meet them.

In addition, an onsite trade fair will be held where you can meet with technical assistance providers, micro-lenders and business resources. Represented at the fair will be the Nebraska Business Development Center, SBA, SCORE, New Community Development

Corporation and several others. Procurement assistance, new business formation, business consultation, micro loans, loan guarantees and many other services will be represented by the various firms that will be present.



This forum is a joint program of the Omaha Branch of the Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City and the Minority Economic Development Council of the Greater Omaha Chamber.

No charge if you register in advance, \$10 if you pay at the door.

Register by Monday, February 22, at OmahaChamber.org/Events.

SOCIAL IMPACT FORUM—EMPOWERING SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN OMAHA AND BEYOND



Challenge Yourself. Change Your World.

The Forum will run from 8:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m. on Friday, February 26, 2010, at Creighton University.

FORUM REGISTRATION

Registration includes admittance to all the sessions, refreshments and lunch. General registration is \$50, student registration is \$20, and non-profit representatives can attend for \$35.

The registration deadline is Monday, February 22, 2010. Information about the Forum and registration details are available at <http://socialimpactomaha.org>

This Forum is looking for leaders, doers, and risk takers who are passionate about impacting their community.

Challenge Yourself. Change Your World. That's the theme of Omaha's first Social Impact Forum.

ENGAGE, EMPOWER, ENERGIZE

Become **engaged** as you meet fellow advocates. Grow even more **energized** as dynamic speakers share personal, proven formulas for improving the lives of others—locally, nationally and globally. Emerge **empowered** to make Omaha a better community in which to live and grow. Together, we can change our world!

The opening keynote address will be “Why Social Entrepreneurship, Why Omaha, Why Now.” Breakouts sessions will follow throughout the day built around the themes of Empower, Energize, and Engage. The luncheon keynote will be delivered by Stephen Vogel, Grameen America, who will share “How One Idea can Change the World-The Story of Grameen Bank.”

Social Impact Forum Omaha is a consortium of change makers, passionate and forward thinking. The Forum's mission is straight-forward—empower people to positively impact their world.

Targeted Teaching Topic



The 2010 Census – It Counts for Entrepreneurs

"The actual enumeration shall be made within three years after the first meeting of the Congress of the United States, and within every subsequent term of 10 years, in such manner as they shall by Law direct."

-- Article I, Section 2 of the Constitution of the United States

DOES IT MATTER?

The U.S. Census counts every resident in the United States, and is required by the Constitution to take place every 10 years. The March 2010 census form will be delivered to every home in the United States. But, delivery doesn't mean completion. When a household doesn't fill out the form or gives inaccurate information, very real money is at risk.

Over \$400 billion in federal funds are distributed each year based on data from the Census. If a state's population is undercounted, federal funds flowing to the state will likely decrease, which can impact on taxes assessed at the local and state levels. Hospitals, job training centers, schools, senior centers, infrastructure projects (bridges, tunnels, and other public works projects), not to mention emergency services, are impacted with the rise and fall of government funds.



ENTREPRENEURS CAN "MINE" CENSUS DATA TO THEIR ADVANTAGE

The Census Bureau is a treasure trove of information and resources. For entrepreneurs, census data can be mined (dug into) in order to make sound decisions and to take carefully considered risks in order to grow a venture.

A U.S. Census is conducted every ten years. In addition, an Economic Census takes place every five years. Each provides data that can be used by businesses in multiple ways. Some of the ways that entrepreneurs can use Census data include:

- ◆ Gauging the competition
- ◆ Calculating market share
- ◆ Business to business outreach
- ◆ Site location



Go to <http://www.census.gov/epcd/ec02/uses.htm> to see specific examples of each of these.

In Nebraska, and most other states, Small Business Development Centers help business owners assess their marketing and management challenges and become familiar with data sources such as the Economic Census.

So, it's important for educators, and particularly entrepreneurship educators, to share with students why it's so important for the U.S. Census and Economic Census to be greeted positively by each household and to discuss how the information compiled from each offers benefits to citizens and entrepreneurs.

Sources: <http://www.census.gov/epcd/ec02/uses.htm> and <http://factfinder.census.gov/>

NATIONAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP WEEK-NEBRASKA PROCLAMATION



Entrepreneurship Week-Nebraska will be proclaimed by the Governor of the State of Nebraska during a ceremony in the Warner Chamber of the State Capitol at 10:30 a.m., Wednesday, February 11, 2010.

Representatives from the Nebraska Entrepreneurship Task Force (NET-Force) will be on hand to help celebrate the proclamation. NET-Force is a broad coalition of partner organizations committed to engaging, empowering, and educating entrepreneurs.

The United States House of Representatives resolved to recognize an annual National Entrepreneurship Week that this year is February 20-27, 2010. A multitude of events are planned across the state by NET-Force members and others. A calendar of events in Nebraska can be accessed at www.nationaleweek.org.

National Entrepreneurship Week provides an opportunity to focus on the innovative ways in which entrepreneurship education and training can bring together the core academic, technical, and problem solving skills essential for future entrepreneurs and successful workers in future workplaces.

The week is a wonderful way to reach out to educational leadership nationwide and encourage them to support entrepreneurship education programs and activities that prepare our youth and adults for careers in the 21st Century.

For more information about Nebraska Entrepreneurship Week events or to report on events planned in your community, contact Gregg Christensen, Entrepreneurship and Career Education Specialist, Nebraska Department of Education, 301 Centennial Mall South, Lincoln, NE 68521-4341, 402.471.4337, gregg.christensen@nebraska.gov.

Gregg Christensen
Entrepreneurship and Career Education Specialist
Instruction and Innovation Team
 301 Centennial Mall South
 P.O. Box 94987
 Lincoln, NE 68509-4987
 402.471.4337
gregg.christensen@nebraska.gov
www.nde.state.ne.us/entrep-ed/



For timely information on topics related to entrepreneurship and entrepreneurship education (K-20) at the local, state, regional, national and international levels and to share information with others, sign up for the Nebraska Entrepreneurship Education Listserv log on to:

<http://lists.k12.ne.us/mailman/listinfo/entre-ed>



Skills for Lifelong Learning, Earning, and Living